

Message Text

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ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ERDA-07 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-04 USIA-15 OES-06 SP-02
SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 ACDA-10 FEA-01 XMB-04 /119 W
-----151033Z 046001 /17

R 150955Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WESHDC 5784

UNCLAS TUNIS 1080

DEPARTMENT PASS USDOC/CAGNE AND EXIMBANK

E.O.11652: N/A

TAGS: BENC ENRG TS

SUBJECT: TUNISIAN NATURAL GAS PROJECT

REF: USDOC 01683 AND TUNIS 8832

1. STEG PRESIDENT SADOK BAHROUN TOLD ECONOMIC COUNSELOR FEBRUARY 14 THAT CONSULTATIONS WITH INTERESTED FIRMS IN RESPECT TO ENGINEERING WORK ON MISKAR NATURAL GAS PROJECT WILL BE HELD WITHIN TWO TO THREE MONTHS. HE SAID PLAN THEN IS FOR TENDER ON DEVELOPMENT DRILLING PLATFORMS IN MAY AND MAJOR TENDER ON BALANCE OF EQUIPMENT BETWEEN JULY AND SEPTEMBER.

2. BAHROUN AND STEG DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT AND COORDINATION, KEMAL REKIK, SPECIFICALLY CONFIRMED RECEIPT OF TELEXES FROM ALL AMERICAN COMPANIES CITED IN USDOC 01683. THEY SAID URGENT AND SPECIFIC INQUIRIES BEING ANSWERED AND MORE GENERAL EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST NOTED WITH A VIEW TO PROVIDING MORE DETAILED INFORMATION AND ENTERING INTO CONSULTATIONS TWO OR THREE MONTHS HENCE. (BAHROUN SAID THAT HE HAD ALREADY RECEIVED VISITS FROM PARIS AND BRITISH EMBASSY INQUIRING ON BEHALF OF DAVY POWERGAS). BAHROUN AND REKIK ASSURED ECONOMIC COUNSELOR THAT GOT INTENDED TO UNCLASSIFIED

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CONSULT WITH ALL SERIOUS SPECIALIZED ENGINEERING FIRMS AND THAT THE LIKELY CONTINUATION OF FRENCH (ELF-AQUITAINE) IN PROJECT WITH REDUCED MINORITY INTEREST, WOULD IN NO WAY BIAS PROCUREMENT.

3. WHEN E/C COUNSELOR CITED ADVICE OF OTHER GOT OFFICIALS THAT NO FINAL DECISION TO GO AHEAD WITH MISKAR PROJECT WOULD BE MADE

UNTIL JUNE OR JULY, BAHROUN REPLIED THAT PROJECT NOW IS "99 PERCENT SURE" ON BASIS OF PRESENT ESTIMATES OF 50 BILLION CUBIC METERS OF PROVEN RESERVES AND 80 BILLION CUBIC METERS OF PROBABLE RESERVES. HE SAID FOURTH TEST WELL ("MISKAR FOUR") TO BE COMPLETED IN MARCH SHOULD PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY DATA FOR FINAL DECISION. BAHROUN STATED THAT ALL EVIDENCE POINTS TO POSITIVE DECISION AND PRIME MINISTER HAS EVEN ASKED IF TARGET DATE FOR PRODUCTION START-UP COULD NOT BE ADVANCED FROM 1980 TO 1979 IN ORDER TO MEET THE SCHEDULED REQUIREMENTS OF GAS FOR SOUSSE POWER PLANT AND SEPA FERTILIZER PROJECT.

4. IN RESPECT TO "ANTICIPATORY" TENDER ON DRILLING PLATFORMS, BEKIK SAID TENTATIVE PLAN WAS TO TENDER FOR PERHAPS 2 TO 4 STANDARD PLATFORMS OF 6 OR 12 WELLS EACH, AT FIXED PRICES FOR INSTALLED UNITS.

5. BAHROUN NOTED THAT REKIK WOULD BE VISITING WASHINGTON FEBRUARY 28 THRU MARCH 3 TO CONSULT WITH IBRD REGARDING LATTER'S EXPECTED FINANCIAL ROLE IN PROJECT. HE SUGGESTED AMERICAN ENGINEERING FIRMS DESIROUS OF MORE INFORMATION COULD GET IN TOUCH WITH REKIK C/O MR. ROVALI OR MR. BOURCIER AT THE IBRD. VISITS HERE BY THEIR REPRESENTATIVES ALSO WOULD BE WELCOME.

6. SOME ENGINEERING FIRMS INTERESTED IN MISKAR ALREADY ARE VISITING TUNIS. WE SUGGEST U.S. COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES "IN THE AREA" MIGHT USEFULLY CALL ON STEG, ETAP AND THEIR FRENCH PARTNERS. REKIK VISIT TO WASHINGTON AT THE END OF THIS MONTH ALSO WILL AFFORD EARLY OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS PROJECT DIRECTLY WITH THIS KEY STEG OFFICIAL WHO ALSO SERVES AS CHAIRMAN OF JOINT U.S.-FRENCH COMMITTEE

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OVERSEEING MISKAR ENGINEERING STUDIES.
MULCAHY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
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Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 15-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770238/aaaabhwf.tel
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TAGS: BENC, ENRG, TS, (BAHROUN, SADOK)
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Type: TE
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